

Jury Reports CIA Events 2006 Summary

1st SOUTH AMERICAN HAB Championships
Rio Claro, Brazil
Event Director: Leonel Brites

3-11 June

Masashi Kakuda
Salvator Haim
Anita Noguera

Jury report received.

>40 competitors - ~12 flights - 34 tasks

One protest involving modified marker (damaged by inflator fan). The protest involved the son of one of the jurors. This juror did not take part in the Jury meeting on the protest. Outcome of protest not known.

Overall a poorly performed event with many deviations from regulations and common practice.

1. Officials were too few and too inexperienced.
2. No Safety officer
3. No weather officer and no weather briefing
4. Safety Handbook not used
5. Competition Handbook not used
6. One pilot did not have stipulated experience (<50 hours as PIC).
7. Rules submitted to AX WG only two weeks before the event and translated to Portuguese from a Spanish version. Portuguese version said to have priority but incorrectly translated.
8. "Normal" AX rules mixed with AX-GPS rules created some conflicts
9. No PZ details and no information on use of GPS given at General Briefing
10. Scoring software not authorized and producing score sheets with errors and without some required data.
11. GPS loggers were kept in the baskets and therefore loss of signals occurred frequently

AX-WG action/discussion required on items 7-11

LUXGSM TROPHY 2006, World Honda Grand Prix
Echternach, Luxembourg
Event Director: Claude Weber

26-30 July

Debbie Spaeth
Jakob Burkhard
Vladimir Karnaukov

Jury Report and Event debriefing report received

35 competitors - 5 flights - 13 tasks

One protest involved a missing logger mark. Protest denied.

Jury recommendations:

1. MER –This document must be continually monitored to be sure the rules reflect current and new technologies incorporated into balloon competition.
2. CIA Document Coordination – Recommended that CIA appoint a person or committee to monitor that all CIA documents are “in synch” with each other. For example- At the 2006 CIA Meeting the Competition Operations Handbook (COH) became compulsory. However, a review of the COH shows that there are items that are in conflict when compared to the Model Event Rules (MER) which are also compulsory.
3. Demonstration of Equipment – In particular GPS/Loggers. During the General Briefing, the officials should demonstrate the features, on-off, logger buttons, etc for the GPS model to be used at the event. While many pilots may be returning to the event and are familiar with routines, it is best to make no assumptions about pilot knowledge of the GPS used at the event. The jury recommends that a demonstration of the GPS should be made at the General Briefing to give all pilots the same basic information on the equipment used at the event.

Items discussed at the Event Debriefing

4. CIA Recall Procedures need Updating. - The pager/beeper systems have been eliminated in most countries. The replacement system is the cell phone, along with text messaging. There are still areas of poor reception for phones but this is the current technology. Organizers must consider how to implement recall procedures using cell phones while also considering that participants from different countries have different types of cell phone systems.

5. GPS/Loggers - There was a request to continue to monitor and implement improvements in the Logger technology. In particular, pilots would like to see a screen showing the altitude of the logger so it can be compared to the altitude shown on their personal GPS for reference and comparison during tasks.
6. Observers to be returned? - There was a lengthy discussion about Observers, cost, variety of tasks allowed, etc. Some pilots want observers so additional types of tasks can still be called. There was discussion of the cost of observers (food, lodging, travel allowance) versus purchase of GPS (approx 3 years to recover cost in comparison to Observers).
7. Technology versus Flying –There was a discussion about the need to balance new technology against testing the flying skills of competitors. - And to keep in mind we are looking for the pilot with the best flying skills, not testing his knowledge of the newest technology alone.
8. Weather Briefing – There was a request for more local detail in the forecast. And a request for a model of wind over time.

14th COUPE d'EUROPE, 17th LADIES WORLD CUP
Mainfonds/Blanzac, Charente, France
Event Director: Riadh Hadj-Azzame

3-6 August

Jacques Soukup
Claude Weber
Hanne Hohmann

No Jury Report received

18th LADIES WORLD CUP, XXII Polish Championship
and 7th Polish Balloon Cup. Wloclawec, Poland
Event Director: Mathijs de Bruijn

16-20 August

Zoltán Palhegyi
Johann Fürstner
Tomasz Kuchcinski

Jury Report received. No protests

38 competitors - 6 flights - 17 tasks

Jury members Alexander Gruber and Torben Hansen replaced for family reasons shortly before the event. Replacements approved by Jury Board and CIA President.

Jury recommendation:

The Pilot Flight Report Form should be standardised and should include tracks PIDs of the take off point, landing point and all task results which have to be filled in by the scorers. Alternately a printed list of this data would be helpful. This would make a quick result check possible in any case of complaint by the pilot or checking the result by officials or by the jury.

50th COUPE GORDON BENNETT
Waasmünster, Belgium
Event Director: Moniek Vande Velde

7-16 September

Don Cameron
Gerrit Heirmann
Stella Roux-Devillas

Jury report and Event Debriefing report received. One protest regarding penalty for airspace violations. See below. Summary of Jury Report follows.

Balloon Volumes

Before the event, concern had been expressed that some competitors might have been using balloons larger than is permitted under the rules. In view of these concerns, the jury decided to measure the volume of all the balloons in the championship. The measuring method may be of general interest, and is described in detail in Appendix 1 to the jury report.

The jury was completely satisfied that no balloon entered in the event had any significant departure from the volume rule (3.1).

Air Traffic Control Violations and protest

The excellent sporting outcome of the event was tarnished by a number of serious Air Traffic Control violations which necessitated delays to commercial airline flights. The organisers, together with the CIA President, took a very serious view of this, as it could threaten the future of the Gordon Bennett event and other long-distance balloon projects.

At the time of finalising the official results, complete evidence was available for only one incident. This team was disqualified. It was known that some other violations occurred, but evidence was expected only after transcripts of ATC transmissions can be analysed in the course of several weeks. The Jury

recognised that the results it had certified at the end of the championship may be open to appeal, if these investigations yield new evidence.

When all evidence from ATC had been analyzed, two more teams were disqualified. After a protest, the jury decided to withdraw the disqualifications and replace them with a penalty of 100% of the distance flown by each of the three teams.

Commentary on Possible Rule Revision

There were no substantial problems during the event in which an undesirable sporting result arose from the rules, but, on examination, a number of minor points seem to require updating.

1.3 and 5.1: The definition of distance is not quite precise. I propose that the last sentence of 5.1 be changed to "The distance will be measured by determination of the arc of the great circle in accordance with the FAI Sporting Code Section One." (Methods of distance measurement now differ between the air sports and are defined in the specialised sections.)

In the 2006 event, the distances were calculated using the CBFAI program which conforms to Section One.

Some questions arose from the differences between the tracker results and the pilots' landing certificates. Some matched precisely, while others seemed to have been switched off before accumulating a group of static positions confirming the landing. The differences were insignificant in this event, but, in future, it may be desirable to specify in the rules whether the certificates, the tracker data, or the least advantageous of the two, will take precedence.

2.1 and 2.2: These rules demand that the pilots should hold the nationality of the country that they represent. This differs from the provisions of the General Section for representation. Is there a reason for this?

2.2 Experience of 12 months and 50 hours seems very low for the challenging conditions that Gordon Bennett pilots must face. Yet even 50 hours can be difficult to accumulate in a gas balloon. Perhaps 200 hours in any balloon, with a reduced gas requirement might be considered?

The most important knowledge can be obtained on the ground. Training in air traffic control procedures, familiarity with equipment, sea survival techniques etc. may be more important, but are not controlled. Perhaps it might be a condition of entry that the teams attend a seminar covering these subjects; this might be a more effective way of obtaining competent behaviour in air traffic control..

Chapter 4 – INSTRUMENTS, EQUIPMENT AND OTHER

The ATC blunders were due, in part to inadequate equipment. Weak VHF radios, poor installation causing unreliability and not enough batteries were spoken of after the 2006 race. Perhaps some minimum requirements and either inspection or third-party testing of communication equipment should be required.

I am not satisfied that all balloons had sea survival equipment to an adequate standard. Immersion in the cold water of the sea in the northern Norwegian area or even in any part of the North Sea could be fatal very quickly. If flights are to be conducted over water again, lifejackets, survival or dry suits and an inflatable raft should be minimum equipment together with the ELT already demanded.

9.3 The present text is unclear; it states "The time limit for complaints and protests is 10.00 hours on **September 15, 2006** or four hours after publication of the official results whichever is later. Protests must be handed in within two hours of reply to a complaint."

I propose that this is changed to "The time limit for complaints is 10.00 hours on **<date>** or four hours after publication of the official results whichever is later. Protests must be made within two hours of the reply to a complaint."

The minutes of the CIA meeting of April 1980 contains some difficulties

Art.3: states that General Conference only may change the rules – this would be better brought back to CIA. The delegates to the General Conference do not have the appropriate expertise for this.

Art.6: "...balloons shall be filled with gas having the same specific weight and the same chemical composition." This was, no doubt, written in the days when coal gas was obtained from a local gas works. It should be amended to consider hydrogen and helium – the only gases likely to be used today. If, at a hydrogen event, a pilot has a balloon restricted to helium, and he meets the cost and accepts any loss of performance, I can see no reason why his entry should not be accepted.

"Pressurisation of the balloon to maintain a constant density altitude shall not be permitted." So presumably a lesser degree of pressurisation is allowed, and heating the gas (Rozière) is allowed? In my view it should be so, but some discussion is needed before such an interpretation could be taken seriously.

The Rozière offers the best technology today for long-distance ballooning. Watching the balloons take off, I felt as if I was attending a meeting of vintage aircraft. These balloons were greatly inferior in both performance and safety to those used in, for example, the Atlantic balloon race of 1992. But, of course, there is an economic implication – hydrogen is usually much less expensive than helium. If a free choice were allowed, the Rozières would tend to win, just as they have beaten all the gas balloon records, but then the same applies to any technical improvement. It could be argued that the introduction of Rozières might meet the stated aim of rule 1.2b – "to promote the development of the sport of gas ballooning by an international comparison of pilots' performance and balloon materials"!

Jury Board note:

GB General Principles (1980).

This should be regarded as an historic document rather than binding rules. The rights to the rules and the power to change them were transferred to the CIA already in 1984. See CIA Minutes 1984, item VIII

In 1987 it was clarified in the Sporting Code, Section 1. See CIA Minutes 1987, item 9.

It is now clearly stated in SC 1, 6.2 that CIA has full control of the GB rules.

A note under Art 3 of the GB General principles could be added to reflect this change.

GB MER 2.1 and 2.2 and GB General Principles (1980), Art 7.

These rules are in conflict with Gen Section 3.7 and 8.1 and should probably be amended. GB MER 2.1 and 2.2 can be changed and a note should be added under Art 7.

Debriefing

The greater part of the discussion was devoted to the Air Traffic Control problems. The Airspace Coordinator described the problems. It was clear that any repetition of this poor performance will threaten the existence of the race and make it increasingly difficult to negotiate that countries will be open to overflights in future years.

There seemed to be three causes (1) pilot ignorance, (2) pilots who know what to do, but do not consider it important and (3) inadequate and unreliable communication equipment including inadequate batteries. Solutions discussed were a compulsory educational seminar before the next race and possibly some minimum specification and inspection of equipment.

The problems with hydrogen had made it necessary for the pilots to be on the field from 6am. This was undesirable before a long balloon flight. It had been caused by the very tight budgets this year which, it is hoped, will not recur next year. The inaccessible location of the launch field was mentioned, with movement made impossible by the arriving public.

6th MOL CUP INT HAB Championship
Debrecen, Hungary
Event Director: Mathijs de Bruijn

20-24 September

Alex Nagorski
Sandor Hidas
Vladimir Karnaukov

Jury Report received
No protests.

35 competitors - 5 flights - 13 tasks

The tasks were a combination of virtual and regular tasks. Using the virtual tasks the Event Director was able to fly the balloons over the host city and put the competitors well above minimum altitudes. The competitors seemed to like the tasks being called.

The Event Director was also the Chief Scorer as he had written the software to calculate the virtual tasks. In reviewing the software and calculations all seemed to work properly although ongoing auditing of the calculations would be time consuming and disruptive of the scoring process as set up for this event. Ideally,

the Jury should have access to the software and logger results, in a network environment, to be able to display and analyze the results. But that would require extensive knowledge and familiarity of the program.

In this type of scoring environment the best the Jury can do is to sit down with the Scoring Officer to review a few results and also do the regular review of the scoring formula since paper documentation is minimal. As more virtual tasks and competitions occur it is appropriate to consider how much the Jury should be auditing and how best to do it.

See also: Jury comment on 18th LADIES WORLD CUP etc, Wloclawec, Poland

17th World Hot Air Balloon CHAMPIONSHIP & WHGP	16-26 November	Tom Sheppard
Motegi, Japan		Tom Donnelly
Event Director: Les Purfield		Bengt Stener

Jury Report and Event debriefing report received 62 competitors - 10 flights - 28 tasks
One protest concerning penalty for reckless flying. Protest upheld.

Jury member Jean Claude Weber was replaced by Tom Donnelly to avoid a conflict of interest as Weber Jr was entered as a competitor. Replacement approved by CIA Bureau June 2006.

General comment by the Jury.

The event organization was top notch with the minimum problems.

The flying was rather scary. There were many collisions in flight, one very serious, with the Director imposing a limit on rates of ascent and descent for the last two flights. A number of Observers expressed their desire not to fly in the competition. We were very fortunate there were no injuries or fatalities.

Background info by Safety Officer

During the first 7 flights there had been 8 collisions. At the task briefing before flight 8, Friday 24 Nov AM, the ED declared his intention to restrict vertical speed to 600 ft/min if there were any collisions in flight 8. As there was a collision during flight 8, the ED called a pilot meeting to discuss the problem.

Report by Jury President on Ascent/Descent rate meeting

In general, pilots were not happy with a vertical speed restriction as they felt they could not fully use the performance of their balloons and they had to monitor their vario instead of keeping a lookout. Many pilots were in favour of high penalties up to disqualification for safety violations.

The ED decided to restrict the vertical speed to 600 ft/min for the remaining flights of the event.

(In the last two flights there were no collisions or near collisions and many pilots and officials noted a better behaviour and a higher safety level)

Event debriefing. Report by the Jury President. Below is a list of some of the subjects discussed.

- **Invitation process.** The 90 day deadline to send invitations is too restrictive (S1 5.2.2). Three places became free after this deadline but could not be filled.
- **Landing close to goals and markers.** Proposal to let observers flying give permission.
- **Numbered goals.** Should be standard in future events. Should be allowed to select also other goals at own risk. More goals than in Motegi (~430) required. Time consuming to check all goals for validity shortly before the event.
- **Observers.** Many were in favour of using observers. Problems are cost and sometimes low quality. Costs could be paid by the observers or by each crew.
- **Weather.** There was very little weather info for the practice flights before the event.
- **Collisions.** Some repetition of the discussion earlier. Many in favour of penalizing reckless flying.
- **Competition.** Invest in trackers with pushbuttons to indicate marker drops. Use markers only within 200 m from goals.

Summary by Hans Åkerstedt 2007-01-09
Original documents available on request